

I arrived at York in the midst of the Grand Festival. It was late at night when I arrived, but the streets were crowded and continued so for hours. I never witnessed a city in such an extreme bustle and so delightfully gay. It was a perfect carnival. I postponed my journey from five in the morning to eleven, and by so doing got an hour for the Minster, where I witnessed a scene which must have far surpassed, by all accounts, the celebrated commemoration in Westminster Abbey. York Minster baffles all conception. Westminster Abbey is a toy to it. I think it is impossible to conceive of what Gothic architecture is susceptible until you see York. I speak with the cathedrals of the Netherlands and the Rhine fresh in my memory. I witnessed in York another splendid sight — the pouring in of all the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood and the neighbouring counties. The four-in-hands of the Yorkshire squires, the splendid rivalry in liveries and outriders, and the immense quantity of gorgeous equipages—numbers with four horses—formed a scene which you can only witness in the mighty and aristocratic county of York. It beat a Drawing Room hollow, as much as an oratorio in York Minster does a concert in the Opera House. The delightful stay at York quite refreshed me. . . . I find Froissart a most entertaining companion, just the fellow for a traveller's evening; and just the work, too, for it needs neither books of reference nor accumulation of MS.

Next day he writes from Edinburgh again. Lockhart has invited him to Chiefswood, and he will of course accept the invitation. 'I intend to go to Melrose to-morrow, but as I will not take the chance of meeting him the least tired, I shall sleep at Melrose and call **on** the following morning. ' Then with an impressive **a/ir** of mystery he gives Murray a code under which, owing **to** the very delicate nature of the names he will have **to** mention, he deems it wise to veil them; and, this serious business disposed of, he unbends sufficiently to end **his** letter with the information 'I revel in the various beauties of a Scotch breakfast; cold grouse and marmalade find me, however, constant.'

The third letter is worth giving at greater length.